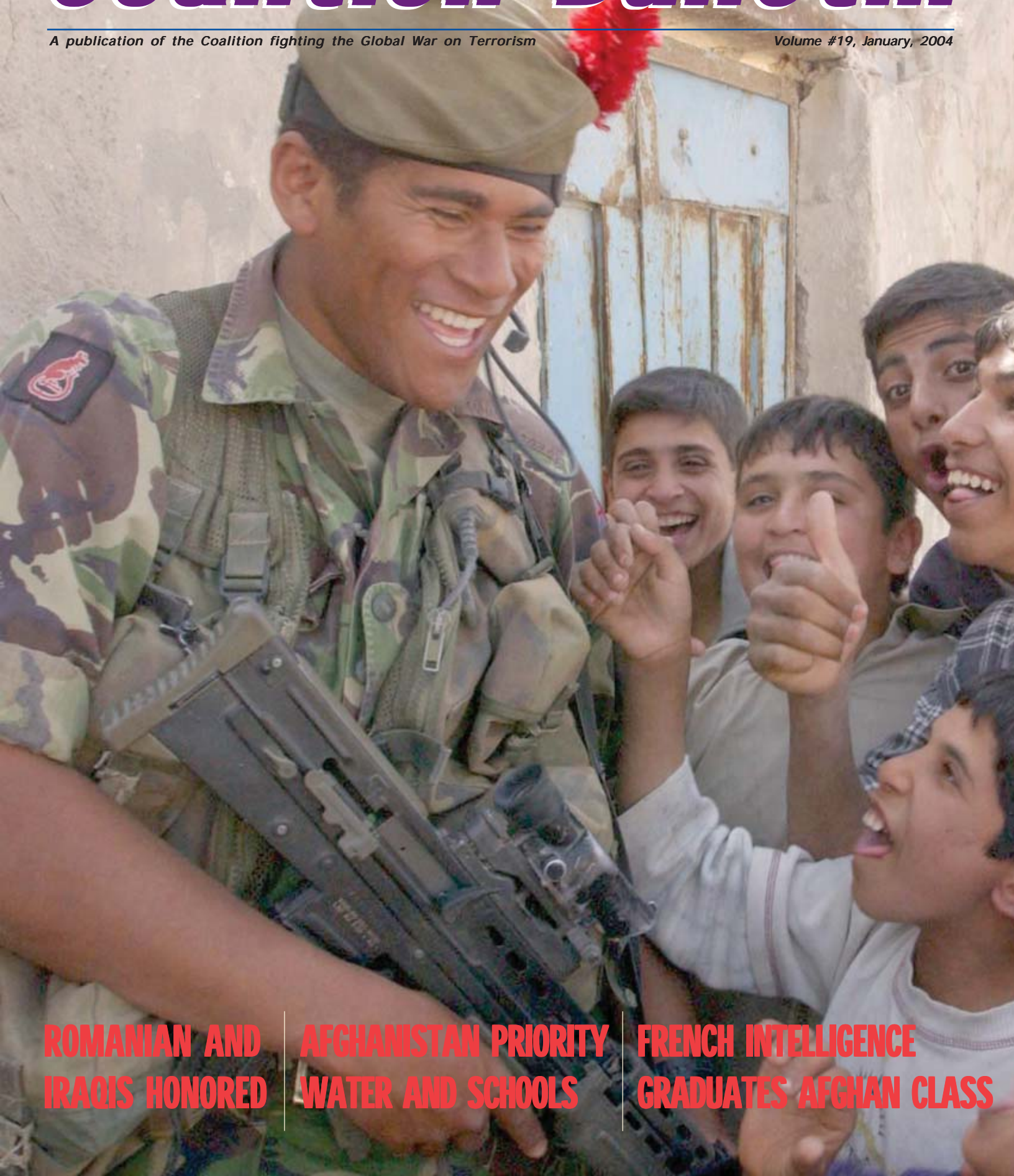


Coalition Bulletin

A publication of the Coalition fighting the Global War on Terrorism

Volume #19, January, 2004



**ROMANIAN AND
IRAQIS HONORED**

**AFGHANISTAN PRIORITY
WATER AND SCHOOLS**

**FRENCH INTELLIGENCE
GRADUATES AFGHAN CLASS**



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Cover photo: A Fijian soldier of 1st Battalion "The Black Watch" with some of the children of Al Zubayr in Iraq.

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"We're not fighting a Viet Cong, which has principles and popular support. We are fighting Saddam loyalists. ... They know they are fighting for a losing battle. The whole Iraqi population is against them."

Ghazi Al-Yawar,
President of the Interim
Government of Iraq

Editorial

The tsunami that hit South Asian countries last month was a reminder of just how devastating a natural disaster can be. All those watching the news of destruction and the mounting death toll were horrified, and our deepest sympathy goes to all those who were affected.



International humanitarian and aid organizations moved quickly to provide assistance to those in need, and many countries deployed military forces to provide immediate assistance until long-term aid arrived.

The tsunami showed no regard for ethnic or religious groupings, and neither for lines between areas of existing conflict.

Indonesia was the closest country to the tsunami, and suffered the greatest loss of life. There was considerable damage to the Province of Aceh, which has been in the midst of a conflict as members of the GAM (Free Aceh Movement) pursue their aim of achieving greater autonomy from the government of Indonesia. The Indonesian government has accused GAM of carrying out acts of terrorism to achieve its aim.

The tsunami struck the south and east coasts of Sri Lanka. In the north and east of Sri Lanka, the government has been faced by the LTTE (Tamil Tigers) who have been seeking to establish a separate state for the Tamils of Sri Lanka. The Tamil Tigers have also been accused of using terror tactics in their civil war.

In both of these countries, the communities of opposing sides in anti-government conflicts have been affected equally by the tsunami. Faced with such destruction, it is heartwarming to see that people have looked to help each other regardless of ethnic, religious and political backgrounds.

An unexpected byproduct of the disaster has been some signs of a thawing between opposing sides. There are plans for a top-level delegation from Indonesia to meet in Finland with leaders of the Free Aceh Movement. This would be the first such meeting for nearly two years. In Sri Lanka there have been welcome signs of reconciliation made in statements by the government of Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers.

While it is too early to predict the success of these initial attempts at reconciliation, it does show that unexpected events sometimes have unexpected benefits.

Neville Reilly

Brigadier-General, New Zealand

Chairman, Public Awareness Working Group




New Trainers for Iraqi Troops



BRATISLAVA – The Slovak government approved a plan to extend its mission in Iraq to training police officers and soldiers, Defence Minister Juraj Liska said.

Slovakia, which is currently involved in demining operations in Iraq, is to start training Iraqi troops and police officers, sending two instructors to the country — although the plans are still subject to parliamentary approval, Liska said.

Bratislava has also proposed that Iraqi personnel could be offered training in Slovakia, but Iraqi authorities have yet to respond, he added. If approved by parliament, the soldiers would leave for Iraq before the end of February. Slovakia currently has 104 soldiers stationed in Iraq as part of the US-led multinational forces in this country.

In June three Slovak soldiers were killed while carrying out demining operations south of Baghdad. 



Collection of Weapons Goes On Apace in Afghanistan




Former fighters in Afghanistan are continuing to turn in their weapons at a “high rate,” a spokesman for the United Nations mission in the country (UNAMA) said today.

Over 34,000 military personnel have so far laid down their arms, Ariane Quentier told reporters in Kabul. More than 8,100 working or repairable heavy weapons have been collected and placed in secure compounds.

While the UN is able to document everything collected, “what is less precise and changing, is the final number of heavy weapons in the country, as we keep finding more heavy weapons, and we are far beyond the initial estimates that were initially given by the Ministry of Defense when the collection exercise began, an estimate slightly above 4,000 heavy weapons,” she said.

Meanwhile, in a development that bodes well for Afghanistan’s gender equality — which was virtually non-existent during Taliban misrule — the Voice of Afghan Women radio is slated to be re-launched next week.

According to Ms. Quentier, tough topics will be tackled. “The 11 female journalists and technicians who operate the radio station will not only broadcast informative programs on health, education, women’s rights and family matters, but they will also tackle sensitive cultural issues such as divorce, forced marriages and honor killings.”

The Voice of Afghan Women’s Association first launched the radio station in March 2003 with the help of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). But because the antenna was too small, the radio could only broadcast to a small area in Kabul. It eventually went off air in November 2003. Since then the German Development Service has provided it with a powerful new transmitter, which paved the way for the anticipated re-broadcast. 



OMC-A Honors Romanians for DDR Work

Story and Photos by U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer Steve K. Gerald, Office of Military Cooperation - Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan - Chief, Office of Military Cooperation - Afghanistan U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Craig Weston honored several personnel for their efforts in turning weapons from the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Program into serviceable equipment for the Afghan National Army.

Weston presented Coalition Coins of Excellence to Romanian Chief Warrant Officer Gabriel Ana and interpreters Mohammad Faisal Kazimi and Mohammad Hamid Wahidi.

The DDR Program, administered by the Japanese-run Afghan New Beginnings Program, disarms Afghan militia and provides job training to transition them into



Chief, Office of Military Cooperation - Afghanistan U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Craig Weston, left, presents Coalition Coins of Excellence to, from left to right, Romanian Chief Warrant Officer Gabriel Ana and interpreters Mohammad Hamid Wahidi and Mohammad Faisal Kazimi.

alternative career fields.

In September 2004, OMC-A began the process of refurbishing weapons received through the DDR program at the ANBP compound at Pol-e-Charkhie. Romanian support of the program has enabled ANA soldiers graduating from basic training at the Kabul

Military Training Center to receive these weapons from the National Supply Depot.

Ana's technical skills and knowledge of the largely Russian weapons supply were critical to the weapons' transition process. Interpreters Kazimi and Wahidi, in addition to interpreting, assisted with moving, inspecting and inventorying the weapons.

Through their combined efforts, as aided by the United Nations, the International Observers Group and the Afghan Ministry of Defense, the ANA has received 3,250 serviceable small, medium and heavy weapons.

Transfer of the weapons from armed militiamen not only takes weapons off the streets, it additionally saves the cost of buying new weapons to equip the ANA. ^{US}



Romanian Kaleidoscope

Story and photos by TF "Carpathians' Hawks" PIO Capt. Cristian Dan, Romanian Army

CAMP MITTICA, Iraq — One of the most important tasks of the Multinational Forces is to assure a secure environment, in close cooperation with Iraqi Security Forces, for making possible a step by step development of Iraq, supporting this way the country on its way to the normal status.

Beside the security matters, bringing the situation back to normal, means



Working at full stretch.

for the MNF to support the local population where they need. So the 812th IN Bn "Carpathians' Hawks" CIMIC team verified the Al Fuhud water system. Based on a CERP funds the project is now completed. It has solved the problem of access to potable water for hundreds of families in the city centre and Al Rasool quarter.

During the inauguration, the local population have expressed their satisfaction and thanks toward MNF. They are very pleased to see the interests of the MNF to solve their day to day problems. ^{US}



"Carpathians' Hawks" CIMIC team's representative with local Iraqi leaders.

Al Islah INTERNET connection of the Youth Centre Computers Point (CERP project) inauguration has shown us a side of the future development desires of the Iraqi people. The worldwide access to information and communications now available for Al Islah people was good perceived by local community. ^{US}

Joint mission with 197th US FA Bde civil affairs team aiming the distribution of 3 tents executed on the 26th of DEC at Hassan al Mushtaba school in Al Fudhliya.

Due to the falling down of the classrooms ceiling, the students have been removed to another school (3 km far away; the access has been done on the main communication between Al Fudhliya and Suq ash Shuyukh, being very dangerous for the children).

The tents, provided by US Army, will be used as classrooms till a new school will be build-up (project developed by 197th FA US Bde located in TALLIL Base). ^{US}



MEDEVAC: Crews Stand By to Save Lives



Staff Sgt. Vicki Wood, 68th Med. Co. crew chief, makes her patient, 12-year-old Abudul Mulek, more comfortable during a Dec. 22 flight from FOB Ripley to Kandahar Airfield.

Story and Photos
by Sgt. Monica R. Garreau,
17th Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — MEDEVAC! MEDEVAC! MEDEVAC! At the sound of those three words over the radio, the tiny operations center of the Kandahar Airfield detachment of the 68th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) springs to life.

The Soldiers of the on-call medical evacuation crew grab their equipment and rush out to their UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter. Each member of the four-man crew completes his final pre-flight preparations and, within minutes, they are off to evacuate their patient. “When we as MEDEVACs get alerted, there’s some kind of severe trauma or life-threatening injury,” said Staff Sgt. Lonnie Bennett, a 68th Med. Co. flight medic.

On this day in late December, the mission is to transport 12-year-old Abudul Mulek from Forward Operating Base Ripley to the hospital at the MEDEVAC detachment’s home base on Kandahar Airfield in southern Afghanistan. Mulek suffered from a severe case of appendicitis and underwent surgery at FOB Ripley. He was transferred to Kandahar for observation.

Although there is no such thing as a routine mission for the MEDEVAC crews,

this one was relatively simple — the patient had already received the operation and was in stable condition. But the contribution they make to Operation Enduring Freedom is not bound by severity of the patients’ wounds, rather their ability to save the lives of their fellow service members and Afghans alike.

“Our concern is to get out there and help whoever it is,” said Sgt. Shawn Hurst, 68th Med. Co. operations sergeant. “It’s a matter of saving a life, regardless of who it is.” No matter who they are saving, the reaction of the crews is always the same. The mindset of the MEDEVAC crews is very steadfast, said Chief Warrant Officer Phil Schantin, a 68th Med. Co. pilot. “Everyone’s very much into the mission. It’s very focused what you’re going to do,” he said. “The fact that whether they get medical care and live or not is based on us.”

While the two pilots are at the controls, giving the patient as smooth a ride as possible, the crew chief is watching for enemy activity and anything that may hinder the flight. Meanwhile, the sole medic onboard is working hard to save the patient. “When it comes down to it, the medics keep them alive,” said Schantin. Sustaining the life of a patient is an “adrenaline-rushing, heart-pounding, what-if situation,” said Bennett. “It’s just you back there, with your nose to the grindstone, doing your best.”

Each Soldier in 68th Med. Co. has a different mission they consider most memorable, but their recount of the event always includes the joy of saving someone’s life. Staff Sgt. Josh Davis, a 68th Med. Co. crew chief, described a recent mission where two U.S. Soldiers lost their lives due to an explosion caused by an improvised explosive device. While the two died on the scene, two


more sustained severe injuries, but held on long enough for the MEDEVAC crew to rescue them.

“That we could get them to the hospital in time to save their lives was just... If you get one mission like that during one rotation, it makes it all worth it,” said Davis. “It’s the most meaningful job that anybody can have, because we’re saving lives every day,” he said.

The flight medics always accompany their patient into the hospital to pass vital information on to the doctors. But the rest of the crews’ concern doesn’t stop once the patient leaves the aircraft. The pilots and crew chiefs often pay a visit to the patient to see how he is holding up and to get a sense of closure on their mission. One of these visits deeply moved Schantin when he talked to the father of a little boy whose life was saved, thanks to the evacuation by his crew. “That was a good feeling,” said Schantin. “You could see (the appreciation) in his face.”

A good day in the MEDEVAC world is judged by a lack of missions, because it usually means that no one in their area sustained life-threatening injuries that day. But they also realize they are operating in a combat zone and there aren’t going to always be good days. Job satisfaction must then come from their ability to help those in need.

“It’s a double-edged sword,” said Schantin. “Your business is based on people’s misery, and the fact that we are able to go out there and provide life-saving care to people is very gratifying. But if I never had to go anywhere because nobody ever got hurt, I’d be happy with that too.”

But Hurst summed it up best. “No business is good business,” he said. 

HOMETOWNS

Capt. Robert Clemmer — Fort Worth, Texas.
CW2 Phil Schantin — Gaithersburg, Maryland.
Staff Sgt. Lonnie Bennett — Buckhannon, West Virginia.
Staff Sgt. Josh Davis — Huntington Beach, California.



French Intelligence School Graduates First Afghan Class



French Capt. Chris Le Bris assists a student during topography instruction.

Story by U.S. Army

Lt. Col. Susan H. Meisner,
Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan
Photos by Army Lt. Col. Susan Meisner
and Reserve Master Sgt. D. Keith Johnson

KABUL, Afghanistan — Twenty-three graduates of Afghanistan's first French-run intelligence class have rejoined the ranks and are ready to apply their new skills.

A French Mobile Training Team from the French Defense Intelligence Agency deployed to Kabul from November to December to complete the course at the Command and General Staff College. Under the auspices of the Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan, the four-week course covered a variety of intelligence subjects.

Students attended classes in the morning and worked at their Ministry of Defense positions in the afternoon.

OMC-A mentors and MPRI contrac-

tors Gail Nelson and Craig Balzer facilitated the class, coordinating with the French Embassy for the MTT's visit. Upon arriving in Kabul, the French team arranged for translations of lessons plans and handouts from French into Dari.



Students pour over a map during topography instruction, which was not part of the original curriculum. To meet students' needs, instructors held the additional class the week following course graduation.

French Lt. Col. Thierry de Seguins and Capt. Chris Le Bris were in charge of training the 23 senior officers of the Chief of Intelligence of the General Staff.

They had nothing but praise for their students. "Our students were very experienced," said Seguins.

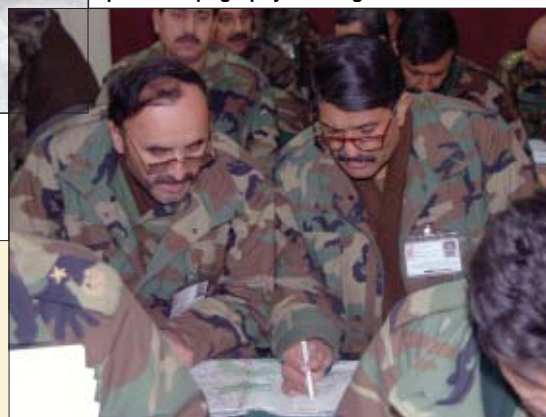
"For more than 50 percent of them, intelligence was their career and they were graduates of the Tashkent Intelligence School. About 49 percent of the others were mujahadeen who had learned in the field.

"They were hard workers and thirsty to learn. This was a new stage for them, to learn and share experiences with Western people."

"It was difficult to get them to share information (at first)," said Le Bris, "as that is not the Russian way." But during exercises and breaks the group mingled, got to know each other better and developed good working relationships.

The course covered writing intelligence memorandums and reports; counterintelligence issues; topography; the intelligence environment; operations intelligence; intelligence processes; and tactics.

Afghan officers work on a map problem as part of topography training.



Gen Khaliq, Chief of Intelligence of the General Staff and a class member, also requested training on intelligence ethics. Guest speakers additionally lectured on civil military cooperation and public information.


The final exercise tested their knowledge at the strategic level. Instructors outlined a terrorist scenario in which students, working in teams, had to write a collection plan and prepare documentation and biographies of key leaders in the subversive movement. They had to react quickly and decisively to the scenario, which reflected current events.



From left, French Capt. Chris Le Bris, French Lt. Col. Thierry de Seguins and Office of Military Cooperation - Afghanistan MPRI contractor Craig Balzer met weekly to discuss progress of the French Mobile Training Team's first intelligence class. The MTT, under the direction of OMC-A, graduated its first intelligence students.

By all accounts, the final exercise was a success. "Some of the senior officers worked very well at the strategic level," said de Seguins. "They had good reactions to the scenario and acted quickly," said Le Bris. "We received high-quality training here," said Afghan Col. Haji Zalmai, chief, technical intelligence at the Ministry of Defense.

"We studied security issues, short-term issues and we learned essential and necessary things for our daily work," said Afghan Col. Shoukatullah Jalal, Chief of Order of Battle at the Ministry of Defense. "We practiced the training as a practical drill with the help of our French instructors," said Jalal. "They did everything we needed for learning, and their kindness made us stick to it and study hard."

"Before," said Zalmai, "We had some deficiencies in knowledge and experience, but now we have received high-quality training." 



Nations Back Trans-Afghan Corridor

Uzbekistan, Afghanistan and Iran joined forces this month to speed up realization of a trans-Afghan transportation corridor aimed at securing a lucrative trade link between Asia and the Gulf.

Visiting Iranian and Afghan officials, after talks with their Uzbek counterparts, approved the creation of an interstate coordination council on the road-building project, Uzbek official said. Details of the scheme have yet to be worked out.

"The document signed in Tashkent will serve as a legal basis to develop the international trans-Afghan transport corridor," Ilkhom Zakirov, Uzbek foreign office spokesperson, said.

The road-building project is important for Uzbekistan, a landlocked central Asian nation, in its drive to reach Gulf seaports, while Afghanistan wants to serve as a transit country between Southeast Asia and the Gulf. Iran for its part is anxious to boost trade in the region.

The goal, agreed upon in 2003 at a summit of the leaders of Afghanistan, Iran and Uzbekistan, is to extend a road from Uzbekistan southwards through Afghanistan to Iran's Gulf Coast, possibly supplemented by a railway.

Uzbekistan has been pushing for the construction of a rail link eastward through Kyrgyzstan and deep into China in order to

create a complete oil transit route between China and the Gulf.

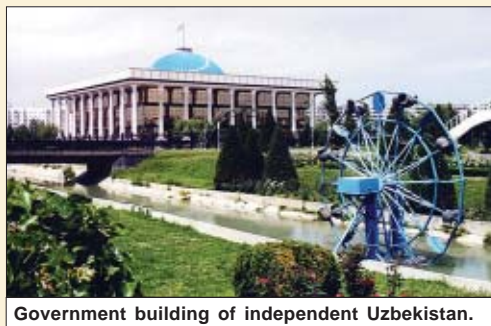
Last year, Japan granted a \$150 million loan to Uzbekistan to help bring its rail system to the border with Afghanistan

by developing a mountainous 110-km section of track in southern Uzbekistan.

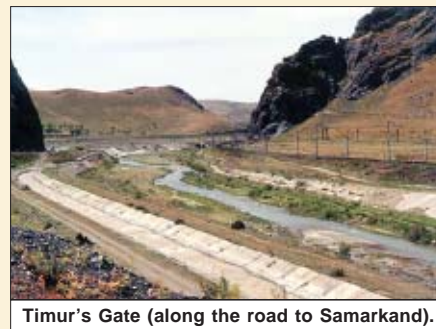
Another \$150m railway project in Afghanistan to connect the

northern part of the country with Uzbekistan's rail systems is waiting for US approval and grant money, an official from the Uzavtoyol (Uzbek auto roads) company, said.


"Once money to help build Afghanistan's infrastructure is granted, our company will start construction of the 101km Termez-Hayraton-Mazari Sharif railway," he said, asking not to be named.



Government building of independent Uzbekistan.



Timur's Gate (along the road to Samarkand).

Uzbek construction teams have been participating in war-torn Afghanistan's rebuilding, restoring bridges and roads in the north. 




A New Contingent in Multi-National Division Central – South

CAMPECHO, Iraq — A 46-Solider contingent from the Republic of Armenia joined Multi-National Division Central – South. MNDSCS commander Maj. Gen. Andrzej Ekiert welcomed incoming soldiers.

They will become a part of the logis-

tics battalion located in the city of Al-Hilla. The main mission for the Armenian troops will be transportation and explosive ordnance disposal tasks.

Armenian troops are among 15 nations contributing to the MNDSCS in Iraq. 



Making the Grade – Afghans Compete for Slots at Command and General Staff College



Marine Col. Laurent Baker, left and French Lt. Col. Jean Laronce discuss the merits of a candidate.

Story by U.S. Army Lt. Col. Susan H. Meisner, Office of Military Cooperation - Afghanistan. Photos by U.S. Army Reserve Master Sgt. D. Keith Johnson

KABUL, Afghanistan - The first candidate of the day wore desert camouflage. He said he completed a six-month military course in Afghanistan and studied in Russia for a year. He served as a battalion personnel officer for 10 years, and as an S4 (logistics) officer for the Northern Alliance.

But this applicant for a slot at the Afghan National Army Command and General Staff College had no documents to prove his schooling. "They were lost in fighting," he said. His answers to probing questions about his personnel and logistics experience were cursory at best. And CGSC commander Col. Bahar Salim and his deputy, Col. Abdul Halim, did not select him to take the competitive exam that is the last hurdle on the road to staff school attendance.

As Afghanistan works to recover and rebuild after 25 years of fighting, the developing Afghan National Army

seeks to put the best and brightest into uniform. It takes years to develop staff officers—the majors and lieutenant colonels who serve on battalion, brigade and corps staffs and fill Ministry of Defense and General Staff positions. But the army can't wait years to fill its staff positions.

"The Ministry of Defense G1 and G3 (personnel and operations officers, respectively) prepare a list of candidates for the selection board to interview," said French Lt. Col. Jean Laronce, commander of the French contingent operating the school.

The ANA is a professional army. Soldiers complete a rigorous basic training course under American supervision, noncommissioned officers attend a British-supervised training course, and staff officers complete the French-run CGSC.

But where do these officers come from?

Many Afghans have military experience, having fought on all sides during the Soviet occupation—for the government with the Russians; as mujahadeen against the Soviets; and with the Northern Alliance against the Taliban. Others

participated in military training programs with other nations over the course of years of fighting. Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration puts warlords and their militia forces out of commission, and into peaceful, alternative jobs. Entrance into the ANA is one option for those who have the "right stuff."

"We are looking for officers with enough education, who will be useful for our country and can bring positive job skills to the ANA," said Salim. "Officers from the mujahadeen who can't read and write shouldn't join."



Afghan Col. Abdul Halim, deputy director, left, listens as Col. Bahar Salim explains the qualities he seeks in his students.

The MOD prepares a list of approximately 300 school candidates. A comprehensive written test follows the oral interview process, which also includes a reading test. The Office of Military Cooperation - Afghanistan, overall responsible for building the Afghan National Army, works in conjunction with the French contingent to ensure the school and process are successful.

"We ask questions (at the interview) that determine an

officer's experience," said U.S. Marine Col. Laurent Baker, Director of the Defense Operating Sector at OMC-A and a selection board member. (Translators fluent in the Afghan languages of Pashto and Dari, as well as French, Russian and English, round out the team.)

Where did the officer go to school? Does he have any documentation proving his attendance? What units did he serve with, and where did they operate? Can he articulate the specifics of his profession, the "how-to" of his trade?

Another factor the selection board considers is ethnicity, with a goal of en-

suring that the officer population reflects all of the ethnic groups in Afghanistan.

The second candidate of the day wore green fatigues. He carried his military school diplomas and a card identifying him as a demobilized militia fighter.

A former battery commander, Baker and Laronce grilled him on the types of guns he commanded and how he deployed them. He spoke

in detail about his wartime experience. He passed the reading test, and the board selected him for the competitive exam.

The board worked hard to be fair. There is no centralized military database to tap for educational records. No personnel center from which to solicit an officer's job history. Lack of glasses prevented the first candidate from reading, until Halim handed him his own reading glasses. Without the paper or electronic records readily available in the West, candidates hold dearly to aged certificates that are irreplaceable.

The board will select approximately 90 candidates to take the comprehensive exam, and ultimately 60 officers will attend each class session. Afghan instructors took over teaching responsibilities in November 2004, and will assume staff roles and independent command of the school in April 2005.

The 11-week training course covers tactical skills; military education and exams; technical and staff skills; international organization and the law of war; physical training; basics of the English language; and computer skills.

This month, the Afghan National Army increased its training capacity from four to five *kandaks*—or battalions (over 3,000 men)—at the Kabul Military Training Center, home of ANA basic training. With over 19,000 soldiers in the ANA, the Army is well on its way to its planned 70,000 strength by 2007.

And the CGSC course will continue graduating officers qualified to lead and administer to its needs. **CB**



Afghanistan Defense Sector Progress in 2004

By British Ministry of Defense Official Richard Berthon, Esquire, Order of the British Empire, Office of Military Cooperation - Afghanistan
Photos by U.S. Army Master Sgt. D. Keith Johnson and Sgt. 1st Class Mack Davis

KABUL, Afghanistan—With the end of 2004, it is appropriate to review the past year's achievements as well as plan for the next. With that in mind, the Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan reviewed the past year's progress at a recent Commander's Call for all OMC-A members.

At the beginning of 2004, Afghanistan was entering a critical phase. The Loya Jirga (or council) had just completed Afghanistan's new Constitution. Timing of the presidential election—and whether or not the security environment would allow for a free and fair election despite terrorist threats—was foremost on the agenda.

The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Program for Afghan militia to stand down, turn in their weapons and take up new professions, had just begun. Coalition forces were concentrating on counterterrorism operations in the south and east, and the Afghan National Army's Central Corps was just taking shape. The Ministry of Defense had only its first 22 staff members.

Progress has been nothing short of momentous. Today, Afghanistan has a newly inaugurated, democratically elected

President—the first in its history. Parliamentary elections in 2005 will continue the momentum of allowing the people of Afghanistan to decide their future through peaceful, democratic means. DDR successes include cantonment of 94 percent of heavy weapons, and disarmament



ANA soldiers fire blanks at a platoon attacking their position during training exercises at the KMTC ranges.

ment of approximately 60 percent of Afghan militia forces. The Afghan National Army—under legitimate civilian authority for the first time in 25 years—is now deployed under Regional Commands across the country.



Basic trainees attend a Cover and Concealment class at the Kabul Military Training Center.



ANA soldiers stand at the ready during the Herat Regional Command Center grand opening.

From those first 22 members of the MOD, we have achieved something that is critical to the success of our mission — Afghan ownership and

responsibility. We now work with an organization of capable decision-makers and leaders. Staff now number 1,000. Planning structures are now in place, and include joint MOD-OMC-A review meetings, Program Budget and Advisory Committees and a Defense Council.

The result of joint activity between the Ministry of

Defense and the Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan is a capable Army—small at present, but highly effective. The actions of this new Army on the ground, supported by the MOD, have made possible all the momentous and

historic changes that this country has gone through in 2004. The ANA has been the decisive difference between 2003 and 2004.

As stated by newly appointed Defense Minister Abdul Raheem Wardak, “The Ministry of Defense and Afghan National Army are at the forefront of the process of creating a modern, stable and prosperous Afghanistan.

Throughout Afghanistan's history, the role of the army has always been critical in determining the country's future.”

And as the army continues to progress, further contributing to security and stability, so will the country continue to progress. **CB**



Water and Schools



Unveiling a pipe built by the engineer detachment in the Daneshmand village.

Story: Col. Garance Gascon

Photos: Warrant Officer

Jean-Raphaël Drahi

Translated from French by Lt. Col. Marc Henry

Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) action's aim is to facilitate the mission accomplished by armed forces by maintaining the population's friendship. This is what CIMIC in Afghanistan is all about. Through a permanent and visible presence of its teams on the field, and their somewhat respectful contact with the Afghan population, it supports the force by winning the people's esteem. Its area of operation is located in Northern Kabul and in the Shamali plain, north of the capital.

The country as a whole still bears the scars from internecine devastating conflicts, but the French Battalion Area of Responsibility (FrenchBat AOR) comprises two very distinctive areas. The area located on both sides of the "Horseshoe" route (Nicknames are given to NATO logistic routes – **Auth.**), the so-called "Gardens of Kabul", represents the granary of the capital city and has no water shortage because it sits right up against a mountainside. Predominately Tadjik, this area stretches out from the Shakadara to the Mir Bacha Kot districts.

The area run across by the "Bottle" route, on the other hand, is mostly Pashtun dominated, was considerably destroyed during the wars and is much poorer. It's the Shamali plain. Districts 11, 15 and 17, although wealthy, have suffered more from occupation and land theft and are also under FrenchBat responsibility.

In accordance with the distribution of the Multinational Brigade Kabul (MNBK) CIMIC teams to the various sectors, the French senior military representative (RepFrance) has transferred its CIMIC responsibility to the Finnish CIMIC Tactical Support Team (TST) in order to concentrate the

CIMIC effort on the Shamali plain.

MIXED WORK

The FrenchBat AOR, in which each district comprises around fifty villages, is shared among the French TSTs. Today, there is a great excitement in Daneshmand city. The crowd only made up with men and boys, gathers around the malek (Afghan mayor), the RepFrance's CIMIC adviser and the TST#3 leader. A ribbon hangs above the structure- a pipe to be more precise- built above the river running across the village. The malek and the CIMIC adviser unveil the project. This structure has a dual function: it will help to cross the village without cutting off the irrigation canal.


Among the men and children, green berets of the French Foreign Legion thread their way. They belong to the Engineer Detachment team in charge of the rehabilitation of the road full of potholes leading to the village, the famous Daneshmand trail. Using bulldozers and engineer vehicles, they completed their task by pouring two concrete plates to form a bridge and by fitting in a pipe.

The engineer team often works for the benefit of the force and the CIMIC teams: they levelled land and repaired the Montbré trail leading to an observation point. The rehabilitation of the Daneshmand trail is a classic CIMIC project inasmuch as it benefits both the force and the local population.

REBUILDING

One must not forget that the CIMIC teams' mission consists in facilitating the ties between the French soldiers patrolling in the FrenchBat AOR and the civilian environment, i.e.: the NGOs, the population, the malek, and sometimes the mullah. In a country which was successively occupied by the Russians then the Taliban, their action contributes to the acceptance of the French army throughout the territory, without being perceived as an occupation force.

Two types of operations allow obtaining such a result. In the short term, the CIMIC *operations* are generally conducted by the infantry company or the search and investigation squadron. Medical consultations, free medicine distribution with the participation of the first-aid post, free flock vaccination, distribution of notebooks and pens, such specific CIMIC operations allow a quick reinforcement of the sympathy for our soldiers. The CIMIC *actions* come under the direct responsibility of the CIMIC detachment. The CIMIC TSTs try to repair, little by little, the enormous damage done by the Taliban occupation. In Kalakan, a well was dug. Farther, Obshakan has a school again; another one is under construction at Akharai.

All these projects, however modest they may be, contribute to the enormous pride the reserve and active personnel from the CIMIC detachment take in participating in the reconstruction of the country. Relief after relief, they also contribute to always provide a little more hope for the Afghan people. 



Three French CIMIC teams take responsibility for around 50 villages each.



Operation IOLAUS Helps Establish UN in Southern Iraq



Prior to setting out on a patrol the team gets a final briefing.

"The Maple Leaf", DND-CF Canada

Canada has a senior CF officer, assigned for one year, as one of three military advisors working directly for the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG), Ambassador Ashraf Jehangir Qazi from Pakistan.

Lt. Col. Alan Smith deployed to Operation IOLAUS in October and is working in Basra, Iraq as the lead element of a future UN regional HQ for Iraq's lower southern area.

UNAMI is a political mission, rather than peace-keeping. Its mandate is to support and advise the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq on the process for holding elections, scheduled for January 30, 2005.

UNAMI also promotes Iraq's nation-building by helping to develop a national constitution, civil and social services, reconstruction, development and humanitarian services.

The key to success is the activation of a large group

of international specialists in elections, humanitarian and political fields, working directly to



Lt. Col. Alan Smith is one of three military advisors working directly for the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq. Deployed to Op IOLAUS in October, he is working in Basra, Iraq as the lead element of a future UN Regional HQ for Iraq's lower Southern Area.

support the interim government's efforts to re-build Iraq.

The volatile security situation in Iraq has required most of UNAMI's people to work from HQs in Amman, Jordan and Kuwait. About 40, including the SRSG and key election advisors, are located in a former school-house near the Iraqi Ministry of Defense in Baghdad. Three military advisors have been instrumental in establishing the lead elements of two UN regional HQs. One is in the primarily Shia's southern region, in the city of Basra; and the other in

the northern Kurdish region, in the city of Arbil. The detachments will grow to include mirror images of the larger HQs with their own electoral, humanitarian and political staffs.

Deployed since October, Lt. Col. Smith is effectively the UNAMI "presence" in Basra. He has established a temporary UN detachment on the site of the US Embassy in Basra and helped to coordinate construction of the HQ


bank of the Shatt al-Arab River in southern Basra.

Part of the UN's efforts to promote Iraqi industry will be to contract with Basra area engineering firms for the renovation of the buildings selected for the regional HQ.

Once these HQs are established, the UN will provide an "inner security ring" with peacekeeping troops. A Fijian infantry company of 134 soldiers will provide inner ring security in Baghdad and eventually, Basra.

Lt. Col. Smith's activities have included assisting in theatre familiarization for the Fijian infantry company, now located in Kuwait; and being the UN's "presence" in the lower southern region.

So far, the last activity has been the most interesting, resulting in discussions with Basra's Governing Council and monitoring a returning refugee transfer operation between Iran and Iraq.

The mission will certainly be an interesting one as Iraq re-joins the international community with UNAMI's assistance. 

on a nearby secure area-formerly one of Hussein's Palaces on the



When travelling to any location Lt. Col. Alan Smith and his american colleague, Capt. John Howard, have an armed escort. They are shown with some of the escort troops from the British Cheshire Regiment.



Extra Troops for Afghanistan



Turkey sends 1,600 soldiers and Takes Control of ISAF Mission



Turkey held a farewell ceremony on Tuesday for 1,600 military personnel who will join the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

Turkey will take control of the force drawn from 33 countries on Feb. 11 for six months. Turkey previously led ISAF for

eight months in 2002.

“Terrorism creates the biggest threat in Afghanistan. NATO has no alternatives, but to succeed in operation in Afghanistan,” Turkish Land Forces Commander Yasar Buyukanit said at the ceremony in Istanbul, according to semi-official Anatolia News Agency.

“Turkish troops have been contributing to the world peace and security in various regions of the world, mainly Korea, Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Somalia,” he added.

The 26-member NATO took control of ISAF in August last year for the first peacekeeping mission outside Europe since it was established more than half a century ago. ^{CB}



Spain Deploys 97 Personnel

A contingent of 97 Spanish troops flew to Afghanistan where they will take part in tasks related to political stabilization in the Central Asian country.

The military personnel flew on board a Boeing 707 Spanish Air force plane, which took off from the Manises military base of the Valencia province in eastern Spain.

The plane made a stopover in Palma of Mallorca, Spain and flew all the way to Manas in Kyrgyzstan, from where the troops were flown by C-130 Hercules transport planes to Kabul.

The contingent will relieve a group of Spanish troops deployed in Afghanistan since last October. Other military contingents of the Iberian country landed in Afghan territory later.

All of the Spanish personnel deployed in Afghanistan are integrated in Spain's ASPFOR (Afghanistan Spanish Force) X Force.

A military spokesman said the Spanish troops will help keep political order, assist local population as well as train the new Afghan National Army. ^{CB}



Estonia Extends, Expands Peacekeeping Mission in Afghanistan

The Estonian parliament extended the mission of Estonian peacekeepers in Afghanistan for another 20 months and increased the number of troops there to 25, the parliamentary press office said.

“The participation of Estonian troops in the mission enables Estonia to contribute to the international anti-terror-

ism fight and peacekeeping in Afghanistan,” Defence Minister Jaak Joeruut said.

Until recently 13 Estonian soldiers served in the more than 7,000-strong NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Estonian soldiers deployed in Afghanistan are involved in mine-clearing operations. ^{CB}



Azerbaijan Sends 20 Peacekeepers to Afghanistan, Kosovo

Twenty Azerbaijani peacekeepers left for Afghanistan and Kosovo to replace soldiers whose mission in these countries has completed.

40 Azerbaijan soldiers are serving in Kosovo and 23 in Afghanistan. 97 Azerbaijani soldiers fulfilling their mission



within the peacekeeping contingent in Iraq were replaced on December 30 on a rotation basis.

A total of 150 Azerbaijan peacekeepers are protecting stability of religious and historical monuments in Najaf, as well as Kirkuk and other cities of Iraq, populated mainly by ethnic Turkmen. ^{CB}



\$120 Million to Hold National Elections in Afghanistan

Afghanistan needs at least \$120 million from international donors to help the country hold parliamentary and local elections this year, said United Nations envoy Jean Arnault.

The cost of the polls will increase by \$30 million if the estimated 3 million Afghan refugees living in neighboring Pakistan and Iran take part.

Karzai, 46, is consulting with the heads of 50 political parties and local community leaders on appointing members of an Independent Electoral Commission, Arnault said.

As many as 400 district elections have to be planned, voter lists drawn up and a decision taken on the participation of refugees, he said. ^{CB}